

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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11

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OC-06 CCO-00 IO-13 OIC-02 /032 W

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R 021130Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5179

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 2387

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PORG, CE

SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: STAFFING COLOMBO FOR NON-ALIGNED
CONFERENCE

REF STATE 163228

1. REFTEL, WHICH MUCH APPRECIATED, CROSSED OUR 2350,
RE SECRETARIAL SITUATION.

2. CAN UNDERSTAND PROBLEM ON VISA PROCESSING. IT HAS BEEN
CONFUSING HEADACHE TO US AS WELL. BELIEVE IT BEST REVIEW
SITUATION. ON MARCH 31 WE RECEIVED CIRCULAR NOTE FROM
MDFA, PORTIONS OF WHICH WE QUOTE:
QUOTE: SRI LANKA MISSIONS ABROAD WILL ISSUE VISAS TO
TOURISTS WHO WILL NOT BE STAYING IN SRI LANKA BEYOND 15TH
JULY AND TO CHARTER GROUPS IF THEY DO NOT STAY BEYOND
31ST JULY. OTHER VISITORS WILL BE ISSUED VISAS AT THE
DISCRETION OF THE SRI LANKA GOVERNMENT. END QUOTE.

3. QUOTE: FOREIGN MISSIONS IN SRI LANKA COULD ALSO MAKE
APPLICATIONS TO THE CONTROLLER OF IMMIGRATION AND
EMIGRATION, GALLE BUCK ROAD, COLOMBO 1, ON BEHALF
OF PERSONS WHO ARE COMING TO SRI LANKA ON OFFICIAL
BUSINESS AND ALSO ON BEHALF OF IMMEDIATE FAMILY
MEMBERS OF THEIR STAFF. THE CONTROLLER WILL IN SUCH
CASES INSTRUCT THE NEAREST SRI LANKA MISSIONS ABROAD
TO ISSUE THE NECESSARY VISAS. NEED QUOTE.

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4. OUR INITIAL READING OF PARA 3 ABOVE WAS THAT THIS WAS NOT AN OPTION BUT A REQUIREMENT. WE BEGAN FILING NOTES WITH PROTOCOL IN MDFA IN ALL CASES COVERED BY THIS PARAGRAPH. LATER WE LEARNED THAT PROTOCOL WAS IN SOME CASES TAKING LONG PERIOD BEFORE REFERRING EACH REQUEST TO CONTROLLER OF IMMIGRATION. AFTER DISCUSSION WITH THAT INDIVIDUAL, WE BEGAN PRACTICE OF STILL SENDING NOTES TO PROTOCOL, BUT WITH DROP COURTESY COPY TO CONTROLLER OF IMMIGRATION, WHO BEGAN ACTING ON THEM WITHOUT WAITING FOR WORD FROM PROTOCOL.

5. IN PROCESS, WE LEARNED THAT IT IS THE CONTROLLER WHO MAKES A DECISION ON EACH CASE AND WHO APPROPRIATELY NOTIFIES THE SRI LANKAN EMBASSY ABROAD. ONE CASE WE LOST WAS THE AUNT OF AN EMBASSY EMPLOYEE WHO WAS COMING ON A VISIT, TOGETHER WITH EMPLOYEE'S MOTHER AND FATHER. AUNT WAS TURNED DOWN HERE AND SRI LANKA EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON WAS SO INFORMED BY CONTROLLER OF IMMIGRATION.

6. AT THIS POINT IN TIME, BELIEVE WE SHOULD CONTINUE PROCEDURE DESCRIBED IN PARA 4. ONE UNCLEAR POINT IS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF AT SOME POINT PROTOCOL MADE A NEGATIVE RECOMMENDATION TO CONTROLLER OF IMMIGRATION. THIS COULD CONCEIVABLY OCCUR AS OUR REQUESTS MOUNT. THIS, ASIDE FROM OUR OWN HOUSING AND OTHER PROBLEMS DURING THE CONFERENCE, HAS BEEN THE PRINCIPAL BASIS FOR OUR DOING OUR BEST TO HOLD REQUESTS DOWN, ESPECIALLY FOR THE PERIOD FROM AUGUST 1 TO 25. WE DID NOT WANT TO LOSE ANYONE WHO WAS NEEDED AS A RESULT OF TOO MANY LESS NECESSARY REQUESTS.

7. AT SAME TIME, TO EXTENT SRI LANKAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON SEEMS WILLING TO ISSUE VISAS, ON WHATEVER BASIS VIS-A-VIS GSL, BY ALL MEANS LET DEPARTMENT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS. YET WE WOULD LIKE TO PROTECT OUR COOPERATIVE (SO FAR) RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CONTROLLER OF IMMIGRATION, AND TO LESSER EXTENT PROTOCOL, BY SENDING A NOTE AND COP QIN EACH CASE. AND, OF COURSE, FOR SOMEONE APPLYING AT ANOTHER POST (DELHI), IT MAY EVEN BE ESSENTIAL WE DO SO.

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8. ACCORDINGLY, AS MENTIONED IN COLOMBO 2278, WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT FOURTH COMMUNICATOR WITH THE STANDBY TELE-COMMUNICATIONS MAN WHOSE NAME WE ALREADY HAVE. WOULD APPRECIATE EARLY ADVICE IN THAT PERSON'S NAME AND PLACE OF VISA APPLICATIONS.

REED

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NONALIGNED NATIONS MEETINGS, ENTRY VISAS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: blochd0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976COLOMB02387
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760258-0067
From: COLOMBO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760796/aaaadgsy.tel
Line Count: 114
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: 76 STATE 163228
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: blochd0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 21 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 JUN 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <21 OCT 2004 by blochd0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: STAFFING COLOMBO FOR NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE
TAGS: PFOR, PORG, CE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006